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STATE FOR PRM, IO, AND RWANDA TASK FORCE

USAID FOR AA/BHR AND BHR/OFDA

NAIROBI FOR DART/RWANDA AND REDSO

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: ARCHIE M BOLSTER
DATE/CASE ID: 05 MAY 2011 201005065

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E.O.12356: N/A

TAGS: AORC, PREF, EAID, UN, WFP, UNHCR

SUBJECT: WFP BRIEFING OF PERM REPS ON RWANDA SITUATION

1. SUMMARY: WORLD FOOD PROGRAM (WFP) HELD AN UNPRECEDENTED BRIEFING OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES ON JULY 25. THE SUBJECT WAS THE RWANDA REFUGEE CRISIS. THIS BRIEFING, SUGGESTED TO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BERTINI BY FODAG, WAS A SIGNAL SUCCESS. BY GENERAL AGREEMENT IT WILL BE HELD WEEKLY TO UPDATE PREM REPS ON THE SITUATION. BERTINI AND STAFF PROVIDED DETAILED INFORMATION, DESCRIBED BELOW, WHILE SEVERAL NATIONS - BELGIUM, CANADA, NETHERLANDS, SPAIN, SWITZERLAND - ANNOUNCED PLEDGES. UGANDA PROPOSED USE OF KABALE AIRPORT IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF THE COUNTRY, BESIDES ENTEBBE. U.S. USED THE OCCASION TO PRESS FOR AID TO RWANDA, BUT ALSO TO MAKE THE CASE FOR CLOSER COORDINATION AMONG U.S. AGENCIES, CLOSER DONOR

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COORDINATION AT ROME, AND, FOR THE FUTURE, MUCH MORE EFFORT IN PREVENTIVE ACTION BY U.N. AGENCIES, NGO'S, AND NEIGHBORS OF POTENTIAL CRISIS AREAS. END SUMMARY.

2. ON JULY 25 WFP CARRIED OUT A SUGGESTION MADE TO IT EARLIER BY FODAG, I.E., THAT WFP BRIEF ROME PERM REPS ON THE RWANDA CRISIS. THE TWO-HOUR BRIEFING PROVED HIGHLY INFORMATIVE. IT WAS SO WELL RECEIVED THAT WFP WILL BRIEF PERM REPS WEEKLY. MOREOVER, THE U.S., SUPPORTED BY FRANCE, PROPOSED PERIODIC BRIEFINGS ON ALL EMERGENCIES ADDRESSED BY WFP.

3. SALIENT POINTS FROM THE BRIEFING; GIVEN BY BERTINI AND KEY STAFF, WERE AS FOLLOWS:

--WFP, WHICH HAD PRIOR TO THE ARRIVAL OF RWANDAN REFUGEES IN ZAIRE TAKEN RESPONSIBILITY FOR FEEDING 2.5 MILLION PEOPLE, NOW PLANS FOR A CASELOAD OF 4.0 MILLION. (THIS REFLECTS INCREASES WITHIN ZAIRE AND DECREASES WITHIN TANZANIA);

--THE NEW SYSTEM OF "RAPID RESPONSE TEAMS" HAD WORKED WELL AND SWIFTLY; WFP PERSONNEL WERE AT GOMA WITHIN HOURS AFTER THE REFUGEE POPULATION THERE HAD BECOME A

CRITICAL MASS; BUT "DEEP FIELD COMMUNICATIONS" COULD
HAVE ENHANCED THE WORK OF THE TEAMS (SEPTEL FOLLOWS);

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--CHOLERA HAD CLAIMED 8-10 THOUSAND LIVES AND WAS
INCREASING, BUT ARRIVAL OF CLEAN WATER, FOOD, AND
MEDICAL SUPPLIES WOULD REDUCE THE DEATH TOLL MARKEDLY
WITHIN A FEW DAYS;

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--WFP ESTIMATED FOOD REQUIREMENTS FOR GOMA AT A
MINIMUM OF 600 TONS DAILY. A THIRD OF THIS COULD
ULTIMATELY BE PROVIDED BY AIR. THE BALANCE WOULD
ARRIVE VIA WFP TRUCKS (CRITICALLY NECESSARY), BY OTHER
AGENCIES' PROVISIONS (E.G., ICRC), OR FROM THE
REFUGEES' OWN SUPPLIES;

--A FEW THOUSAND REFUGEES HAD ALREADY RETURNED TO
RWANDA, IN RESPONSE TO THE GOR APPEAL. NOW IT WAS
NECESSARY TO ENSURE FOOD AVAILABILITY FOR THE
RETURNEES WITHIN RWANDA. (N.B. WFP IS PROPOSING TO
UNHCR THAT WFP TRUCKS BE USED TO TRANSPORT REFUGEES
BACK TO RWANDA.);

--WFP HAD BEEN ABLE TO BORROW COMMODITIES AMOUNTING TO
22,000 TONS; ENRICHED FOODS WERE WFP'S FOCUS FOR AT
LEAST THE FIRST FORTNIGHT (AND, FOR EXAMPLE, SOME
ITEMS, SUCH AS THE U.K. DONATED ENRICHED BISCUITS,
REQUIRED NO WATER FOR PREPARATION). WFP HAD HAD

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ENOUGH CASH ON HAND TO ENABLE IT TO PURCHASE
FOODSTUFFS WITHIN AFRICA;

--AVAILABLE STORAGE FACILITIES INCLUDE
D 2,000 TON
CAPACITY AT GOMA, 3,000 TON CAPACITY AT BUKAVU;

--OF 100 TRUCKS REQUIRED FOR THE OPERATION, ONLY 30
HAVE BEEN MOBILIZED. AN ADDITIONAL 15 ARE TO BE
AIRLIFTED BY U.S. FROM AQABA TO ENTEBBE; A REQUEST FOR
AIRLIFT OF AN ADDITIONAL 35 TRUCKS FROM AQABA TO
MOMBASA IS PENDING (SEPTTEL FOLLOWS). ROAD CONDITIONS
IN EASTERN ZAIRE, HOWEVER, WERE WORSENING, DUE TO
HEAVY LOADS AND THE RAINFALL.

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4. CONCERNING FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS, WFP ANNOUNCED IT
WAS SETTING UP A PROCESS FOR COLLECTING CONSOLIDATED
INFORMATION ON CONTRIBUTIONS MADE TO ALL ENTITIES
PROVIDING RELIEF IN THE RWANDAN REGION.

5. WFP EXPRESSED ITS NEED FOR CASH, HIGH-NUTRITION
FOODSTUFFS, TRANSPORT, AND BULK FOODS. BERTINI ASKED
PERM REPS TO REQUEST THEIR GENEVA COUNTERPARTS TO
PRESS UNHCR ON PROVISION OF SHELTER FOR THE REFUGEES
AT GOMA.

6. THE FOLLOWING COUNTRIES ANNOUNCED PLEDGES FOR
RWANDAN REFUGEE RELIEF:

--NETHERLANDS: USD 5 MILLION CASH TO WFP;

--CANADA: CANADIAN DOLLARS 10 MILLION (AGENCY OR
AGENCIES UNSPECIFIED);

--BELGIUM: USD 1 MILLION CASH (UNSPECIFIED);

--SWITZERLAND: SWISS FRANCS 4 MILLION OF WHICH 1
MILLION CASH FOR WFP;

--SPAIN: AN AS YET UNSPECIFIED CASH GRANT TO WFP.

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(N.B. FRANCE WAS PARTICULARLY COMPLIMENTARY TOWARDS
THE "MASSIVE" U.S. CONTRIBUTION ANNOUNCED BY PRESIDENT
CLINTON.)

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7. U.S. REPS AT THE MEETING MADE THE FOLLOWING
POINTS, INTER ALIA:
--THE NEED FOR U.N.-WIDE COORDINATION WAS EVIDENCED BY
THE PLETHORA OF UNPRIORITIZED REQUESTS FOR US.
AIRLIFT, AS WELL AS BY UNORTHODOX FOOD PURCHASES
(7,000 MT OF CSB) MADE BY UNHCR IN SOUTH AFRICA FROM
THE SAME SUPPLIER WFP HAD INTENDED TO USE (THE FRENCH
PERM REP ENCAPSULATED THE SITUATION AS THE UNHCR
STEPPING TOO FAR OUT IN FRONT, DHA LAGGING TOO FAR
BEHIND) ;

--THE RWANDAN CRISIS HAD DEMONSTRATED THE NEED FOR
PREVENTIVE ACTION, SUCH AS CONTINGENCY PLANNING FOR
PREPOSITIONING STOCKS, MOBILIZING TRANSPORT,
ESTABLISHING COMMUNICATIONS NETS, ADDRESSING HEALTH
EMERGENCIES, AND COALESCING NEIGHBORING COUNTRY
SUPPORT, WHILE IN THE LONGER TERM DEVISING AID AND
DEVELOPMENT MEASURES TO HELP PREVENT OUTBREAKS OF
EMERGENCIES IN THE FIRST PLACE;

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--PERIODIC BRIEFINGS FOR PERM REPS AT ROME SHOULD OCCUR, NOT SOLELY ON RWANDA BUT ON ALL EMERGENCY ACTIONS WFP UNDERTOOK;

--PERM REPS SHOULD INTENSIFY THEIR COORDINATION WITH NEW YORK AND GENEVA COUNTERPARTS, WHILE STRENGTHENING THEIR COORDINATION HERE WITH WFP AND OTHER ROME-BASED U.N. AGENCIES.

OTHER PERM REPS RAISED NO OBJECTION TO THE PRECEDING, BUT AFTERWARDS EXPRESSED CONCURRENCE AND APPRECIATION TO U.S. REPS FOR THESE POINTS. BY GENERAL AGREEMENT WFP IS TO PREPARE A SCHEDULE OF PERIODIC BRIEFINGS ON EMERGENCIES.

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8. MINIMIZE CONSIDERED.
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